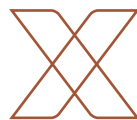


Sin Revealed

Session 5 • Joshua 7:10-23



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Conquest of Canaan*) and **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) on a focal wall. Make copies of **Pack Item 10** (*Handout: The Life of Joshua*).

DISCUSS: What should be a person's motivation to confess sin and seek forgiveness? (p. 45)

READ: Discuss responses, then read the opening paragraph on page 45.

REVIEW: Show adults the locations of Jericho and Ai on **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Conquest of Canaan*). Remind them of the incredible victory God gave the Israelites over Jericho in Joshua 6 because they obeyed Him. Note that today's session reveals what can happen when disobedience creeps in. Summarize this content from **Understand the Context** (p. 45):

- “After the account of the fall of Jericho in Joshua 6, chapters 7–12 summarize the rest of the conquest of Canaan. Joshua 7 reveals that an Israelite sinned against God when the Lord brought down the walls of Jericho. When Achan saw some of the items that were to be set apart for the Lord, he coveted them and took them

for himself. Achan's sin resulted in Israel's initial defeat at Ai. Only when Achan was confronted and his sin dealt with could Israel move on. Joshua 8 describes how God turned away from His anger and handed over the city of Ai to the Israelites.”

TRANSITION: *It is important for us to understand our personal relationship with God in the context of being a part of the people of God. Our actions affect others, often in ways we never expect.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

RESPOND: Write the following on the board or a large sheet of paper: *Our actions impact others, both positively and negatively.* Lead the group to list some personal examples of this from their lives.

CONTEXT: Distribute **Pack Item 10** (*Handout: The Life of Joshua*). Highlight Joshua dealing with Achan in Joshua 7. Direct attention to **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and review the description of Achan. Summarize Joshua 7:1-9 to highlight Achan's sin.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Joshua 7:10-15 as the group listens for what God instructed Joshua to do.

RECAP: Highlight God’s response to Joshua in these verses:

- **(7:11)** “Israel has sinned.” From God’s perspective, the entire nation, not just Achan, had sinned (see v. 1). As a result, the Israelites had to remove the sin and rebellion within the camp before the conquest could move forward. This is known as “corporate solidarity” and can be summed up this way: (1) the whole group is treated as a unit, (2) an individual can represent the unit, and (3) there is little or no distinction between the individual and the unit. Achan’s sin highlights the third concept. God told Joshua that Israel had sinned (v. 11). Yet Achan individually admitted his personal rebellion (v. 20).

ASK: Why is it important for us to recognize sin’s impact on us and our relationship with God? (p. 47) Discuss responses. Draw attention to the “Key Doctrine” on page 47. Affirm that our holy God takes sin seriously. Note that He would reveal just how seriously in the next verses.

READ: Call for a volunteer to read aloud Joshua 7:16-19 as the group listens to how Achan was identified.

HIGHLIGHT: Summarize the process through which God led Joshua to identify Achan:

- “Joshua had the tribes of Israel come forward as the Lord instructed. As he did, the Lord selected the tribe of Judah. Next, the Lord selected the Zerahite clan. Then, the Lord selected the family of Zabdi. Finally, Achan was selected. It was essential the people witnessed

that it was the Lord who was making the selections, just as He said He would in verses 13-15.” (p. 50)

DISCUSS: Lead the group to discuss how long this process may have taken and how Achan may have felt during the process. Lead the group to discuss the different ways Achan could have responded to Joshua in verse 19.

SAY: *Joshua spoke to Achan as a father. He challenged Achan to stop the charade and to come clean before God. His confession would bring glory to God, while hiding his sin was futile.*

ASK: What is repentance? (p. 47) Discuss responses, affirming that repentance involves confessing sin and turning away from it.

ASK: What might prevent one from confessing and seeking the Lord’s forgiveness? (p. 47)

READ: Call for a volunteer to read Joshua 7:20-23 as the group listens for what Achan took from Jericho. Lead the group to share their responses. Lead a brief discussion on how these verses underscore the seriousness of sin in our lives.

RECAP: Emphasize that sin always carries devastating effects, both for the ones who sin and for people around them.

- **(7:21)** Achan’s confession reveals a familiar progression of sin. First, he saw items placed under the ban, then he coveted them. Eventually, he took what he wanted. Forms of these same verbs appear in the record of Eve’s sin in Genesis 3:6. She also saw and took, while the term

for coveted is rendered “was desirable.” Also reminiscent of the garden is the effect. Adam and Eve’s sin affected the entire human race after them. Achan’s sin affected the entire nation of Israel.

ASK: Why is it important for us to view sin as seriously as God does? (p. 47)

SHARE: Write the following statement on the board or a large sheet of paper: *We honor God by repenting and confessing our sins to Him.* Point out that Achan had plenty of opportunities to confess, but he refused until he had no other choice. Remind adults that God wants us to deal with our sin quickly instead of trying to hide what we’ve done.

ENCOURAGE: Briefly walk adults through the Plan of Salvation on the inside front cover. Let them know that you will be available after the session to speak to anyone who wants to talk more about a personal relationship with Jesus or the confession of sin.

CONCLUDE: Emphasize that the story of Achan is an incredible reminder of how seriously God takes sin in our lives. He is a holy God who hates sin and what sin does in the lives of His people.

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week’s Bible passage:

- We should recognize that sin always dishonors God and negatively impacts our relationship with Him.
- We should acknowledge that God is always aware of our sins.

- We honor God by repenting and confessing our sins to Him.

DISCUSS: Guide the group to discuss the **Apply the Text** questions on page 47. Ask: **Why is your sin such a big deal to God?**

SHARE: Note again the Plan of Salvation on the inside front cover. Note that this plan emphasizes an awareness and repentance of sin. Share that this is a key step in establishing a personal relationship with God through Jesus. Remind the group that you will be available to talk about this after Bible study or during the week.

APPLY: Encourage adults to read and reflect on the **Apply the Text** questions from page 51 during the week. Point out the importance of encouraging one another to come clean before God in regard to sin.

PRAY: Lead the group to express to God an understanding that sin brings judgment—while also thanking God for His forgiveness of sin provided through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

AFTER THE SESSION

Follow-up this session by sending the group an email or text with this message: *Remember Achan? Your sins will find you out. Yet, God is gracious. Galatians 6:7.* Challenge them to examine their lives for any unconfessed sins that are bogging them down. Encourage them to reach out to trustworthy brothers and sisters in Christ when they feel overwhelmed by temptation and sin.